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A FEW DAYS IN IRELAND.

FIRST ARTICLE.

THOUGH the various nations united under the British crown cannot be described as ignorant of each other, or of the countries respectively occupied by each other, we cannot help being of opinion that they are not yet on nearly so intimate a footing of acquaintance as they ought to be. Much ignorance still prevails in England respecting Scotland, and in both respecting Ireland; and it seems beyond all question that this ignorance is attended by a deficiency in that mutual sympathy which the interest of all requires to exist amongst the people of the three kingdoms. The English might almost be said to have for the first time *discovered* Scotland at the time of the royal visit in 1822. Before that time, the only Scotland they knew was the Scotland of Churchill—the Scotland of barren rocks and eternal snows, of poor pride and mean and hungry servility: they knew nothing of the Scotland of the nineteenth century—a country in which agriculture was carried to a degree of perfection unknown in the more favoured clime of the south, in which the spirit of manufacture was not less actively at work than among themselves, and which could present such a spectacle of contented, enlightened, and moral population, as was scarcely to be matched in any other country in the world. The cause of this was partly to be found in that gravitation of attention which directs the eyes of all men towards the central and metropolitan parts of a state, to the neglect of the extremities, and partly perhaps in that conceit of its own inapproachable greatness which was wont to distinguish the country of John Bull. Since then, numberless tourists, who had come only in search of the picturesque, have carried back to England, and there disseminated, more correct ideas respecting Scotland and its people—the result of which has been a manifest increase in the fraternal spirit which not only ought to exist between these two nations, but between all the various families of the earth. When indeed we reflect upon the benefits which have obviously flowed in this case from the visits of a few of our southern neighbours, we cannot but hail with the most gratifying anticipations the means which are now in progress for facilitating the intercourse between the two countries. Let but these or any other countries be thoroughly tied together by railways, and thenceforth they are one. A locomotive engine is the very car of Peace.

The insular situation and some other extrinsical peculiarities of Ireland, have tended to make it the least known to the rest, of all the three portions of the United Kingdom. And this ignorance of the English and Scotch respecting the physical and moral character of Ireland, could easily be shown to have an unfortunate effect for all parties. It could as easily be shown that there is much in Ireland to repay the labour of a visit to it—much that is beautiful in external nature—much that is interesting in the state of society—much of all that constitutes the pleasure of a tour, to whatever order of travellers. Nor perhaps do we err greatly in assuming, that the very consciousness of being in the way of promoting a spirit of amity between two nations too long alienated, would, to many, be one of the highest gratifications that could result from a tour in Ireland. With a view to directing attention to this country as a fit object for those recreative expeditions of three weeks or a month which so many indulge in once a year, we propose to give an outline of what we lately saw in Ireland, in the course of such an expedition.

The capital is usually the first point reached by a visitor from Great Britain. The general features of its situation, at the bottom of a small bay indenting

the eastern coast of the island, must be familiar to all. The direction of this bay is of course towards the west, and in the same line is also the course of the river Liffey, which here joins the sea. To comprehend the position of Dublin, and many of the details about to follow, the reader must be made aware that the river, flowing from west to east towards the bay, divides the city into two nearly equal portions. Placed on an extensive plain, but within sight of picturesque ranges of hills, and rocky promontories, Dublin is apt to surprise a stranger by its size (for it is about nine miles in circumference) and its elegance. The leading thoroughfares of the city are easily comprehended. First, from east to west, there is the double line of houses and quays bordering upon the river, the lower part of which forms a harbour, and is crowded with vessels. Crossing this line at right angles, is the great line formed by Sackville, Westmoreland, and Grafton Streets, the first and second of which are connected by Carlisle Bridge, the lowest in a range of eight or nine which span the river at various distances from each other. Parallel to the quays, on the south side of the river, there is a shorter arterial line of great importance, formed by College Green, Dame Street, Castle Street, and Thomas Street, being terminated to the east by the buildings of the University. Though the ancient part of the city occupies the south bank of the river, there is a portion of the mean and elegant on both sides; the streets and squares of the wealthy being here, contrary to the usual rule, in the north-east and south-east districts of the city. All the great lines are formed by houses of lofty and elegant proportions, chiefly devoted to commerce; and the city does not exist which can present a more splendid series of shops and warehouses. Sackville Street, a hundred perches in length, and six in width, with a noble monumental pillar in the centre, and some of the finest public buildings in the world lending it their effect, must impress every one as something worthy of a great city. The spaciousness of several of the squares in the aristocratic districts is equally impressive. Merrion Square is half, and St Stephen's Green nearly a whole mile, in circumference, the latter containing seventeen acres of pleasure ground in the centre. From the material of the houses—brick—and many lesser peculiarities, Dublin recalls to the mind of the visitor many parts of London, beside which city it might be placed without startling any one who should inspect both, with a discrepancy greater than is often found in diverse parts of the same city.

On first walking into the streets of Dublin, the stranger is apt to see, in the throng of carriages and foot-passengers, nothing more than what he expects to find in all large cities. He soon observes, however, that, besides the luxurious class who occupy the better kind of vehicles, and the busy well-dressed crowd who move along the foot-ways, there is an enormous multitude of mean and mendicant figures, such as are only to be found in a small proportion in other cities. This is the very first peculiar feature which the stranger detects in Dublin, and it is an unfortunate one. It is explained when we learn, that, of the large population of Dublin—supposed to approach three hundred thousand—fully three-fourths are beneath what is recognised in Britain as the middle rank. Thus the most elegant streets in Dublin, and the most elegant figures which appear in them, seem isolated in the midst of penury and meanness. A group of splendid belles is jostled by a group of wretched aged females, who clamour for alms. Upon the steps in front of the most magnificent houses are seated homeless and ulcerated lazzeroni, in whom we can hardly distinguish the linea-

ments of humanity. Turn but three steps off any of the thoroughfares which contain the wares appropriate to luxurious opulence, and you find yourself entering upon a wilderness of squalid streets, in the style of Hogarth's *Gin Lane*, crowded with a population bearing such marks of misery as at once to excite disgust and compassion. Even in the drivers of public vehicles, and other classes of persons who, in Britain, are much above want, there is here a coarseness and raggedness of attire, scarcely to be accounted for, if it be not simply the result of a low standard of taste produced by the wretchedness of the majority.

The public buildings of Dublin boast an elegance much above what might be expected from the general character of the city. In sailing up the river, the eye is first attracted by the Customhouse, a large and splendid edifice in the well-known taste of the Adams, surmounted by a dome, and very happily situated upon the north quay. The Post-Office, in Sackville Street, is in that graver form of the Grecian style which has more recently come into favour, extending above two hundred feet in front, with a noble portico surmounted by a pediment. The simultaneous starting of the mail-coaches at seven every evening from the court of this building, is one of the *sights* of Dublin. Opposite to it is a pillar in honour of Nelson, surmounted by a figure of that hero. At the upper extremity of Sackville Street is the Lying-in Hospital, a beautiful building, with which is closely connected the more celebrated Rotunda, together with an extensive plot of ornamented ground. The Four Courts—also a most superb structure—overlooks the river at a point considerably removed to the west, and completes the list of remarkable buildings in the northern division of the city. To the south of the river, the objects worthy of especial notice are more numerous. The buildings of the University occupy a conspicuous situation on the great transverse line of streets which has already been mentioned. Beneath an elegant Grecian front, three hundred feet in length, an archway gives admission to a succession of spacious squares, chiefly composed of brick domestic buildings, and containing a theatre for examinations, a museum, a chapel, a refectory, a library, and other apartments necessary for the business of the institution. In the museum is preserved—perfectly well authenticated—the harp of Brian Boromhe, a famous Irish king of the tenth century. There are usually about two thousand students in attendance at the University. Divided from this building only by the breadth of a street, is the Bank of Ireland—formerly the place of assembly of the Irish houses of parliament. The deep colonnaded front of this building is one of the most beautiful pieces of architecture, not only in the British dominions, but in the world: it carries a charm like a fine picture. The hall where once the Commons of Ireland assembled, where the eloquence of a Grattan, a Curran, and a Flood, was once heard, is now altered to suit the purposes of a telling-room; but the House of Peers remains exactly as it was left by that assembly, being only occasionally used for meetings of the Bank directorate. The latter is a small but handsome hall, adorned with tapestry representing transactions in the subjugation of Ireland by King William—the battle of the Boyne, the breaking of the boom, and so forth, as also a few appropriate inscriptions. In a back apartment is shown an ingeniously formed model of the whole building.

In Kildare Street, at no great distance from the College and Bank, the halls of the Royal Society of Dublin present a powerful claim to the attention of strangers, in the great variety of curiosities, pictures, and models, with which they are filled. In a perambulation of the city, the Castle is the next object worthy

of notice. This ancient seat of the vice-regal government, to which rumours of plots and insurrections have been so often brought by terror-struck spies or remorseful participants, is placed on slightly elevated ground, in the midst of the old or southern division of the city. It consists of two courts, containing certain public offices, and the apartments of state used by the Lord Lieutenant. In the lower court is the Castle Chapel, a beautifully constructed and beautifully furnished modern Gothic place of worship, the whole materials of which are of Irish production, and which cost above £40,000. The service performed here every Sunday forenoon, graced as it is by the finest vocal and instrumental music, and tinged with the rich "religious light" which streams through stained windows, and is reflected from the gorgeous stalls of civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries, is one of the most attractive things in Dublin. The state-apartments of the Viceroy are in the taste of the middle of the last century, and are elegant, but no way burdened with grandeur. In one is a bust of Chesterfield, who was Lord Lieutenant in 1745. The most remarkable room is the ball-room, denominated St Patrick's Hall, which is spacious and lofty, and among other attractions has a ceiling ornamented with pictures, representing transactions in the history of Ireland.

In Ireland, old ecclesiastical structures are usually more curious for their antiquity, than beautiful. Accordingly, the exterior of St Patrick's and Christ-church, the two cathedrals of Dublin, is apt to appear ungainly to an eye fresh from Westminster or Melrose. In the former building, nevertheless, the interior of the choir, in which service is usually performed, will impress every mind by its lofty proportions, its pompous monuments, and the dark stalls and niches, surmounted with the helmets and banners of the knights of the order of St Patrick. Mrs Hemans finely says of this place, that "the imagination recognises it as a fitting place for high solemnities of old—a place to witness the solitary vigil of arms, or to resound with the funeral march at the burial of some warlike king." One of the monuments, a tall marble structure at the east end of one of the side walls, designed to commemorate Richard Earl of Cork, was the subject of much bitter contention in the reign of Charles I., in consequence of the anxiety of Archbishop Laud to get it removed from the site of the communion table to its present position—being supposed, in the former place, to detract from the sacredness of a spot which the narrow-spirited prelate would gladly have once more made an altar. On Sunday evenings this venerable temple is usually crowded with strangers, to whom the chaunted liturgy, the fine tones of the organ, and the music of a full and rich choir, united to the splendours of the scene presented to their eyes, form an attraction not more powerful than it is uncommon. Mrs Hemans has thus passionately expressed herself "on the Music of St Patrick's":

Again, oh ! send that anthem peal again,
Through the arched roof in triumph to the sky !
Bid the old tombs ring proudly to the strain,
The banners thrill as with victory !
Such sounds the warrior awe-struck might have heard,
While armed for fields of chivalrous renown ;
Such the high hearts of kings might well have stirr'd,
While throbbing still beneath the recent crown.
Those notes once more !—they bear my soul away,
They lend the wings of morning to its flight ;
No earthly passion in th' exulting lay
Whispers one tone to win me from that height.
All is of Heaven !—Yet wherefore to mine eye
Gush the vain tears unbidden from their source ?
Even while the waves of that strong harmony
Roll with my spirit on their sounding course !
Wherefore must rapture its full heart reveal
Thus by the burst of sorrow's token-shower ?
—Oh ! is it not, that humbly we may feel
Our nature's limit in its proudest hour ?

In visiting this ancient church, the predominant thought is—SWIFT. We look for his dwelling as we approach, and for his tomb when we enter—such is the power which genius has of fixing the feelings of men for all time upon every external thing connected with it ! The deanery still exists in St Kevin Street, containing the portrait of Swift from which all the engraved likenesses have been derived. His monument—a plain marble tablet, surmounted by a bust—is placed upon a pillar in the nave of the cathedral, with its awful

— ubi saeva indignatio
Uterius cor lacrare noquit.*

On the next adjacent pillar is the marble which commemorates his own gentle Stella—the amiable and submissive, though bright spirit, over which he exercised, by pure force of mind, so extraordinary an influence, and which he so unaccountably permitted to pine away for him, till its tabernacle here found a premature grave.

The streets immediately surrounding St Patrick's Cathedral are the meanest and vilest in the city. The houses have a ruinous and forlorn look, and the pavements are crowded with a population of the most wretched order. These streets are filled with shops, but the trades to which they are devoted serve rather

to betray the misery, than to manifest the comfort, of the people. Dealers in old clothes, pawnbrokers, spirit-dealers, and persons trading in loathsome offals, which are almost the only specimens of animal food ever indulged in by the lower orders of the people, abound. On studiously inspecting several low and dismal shops, little was to be seen besides a heap of potatoes. The same description might be applied to nearly all the humbler parts of Dublin. In portions of the city which are considered somewhat more respectable, the mean is found curiously mingled with the decent. A tolerable house, having a brass knocker, and an appearance of drawing-room curtains, and probably the residence of a comfortable family, will be found in the midst of a range of shattered and battered tenements, the haunts of misery and vice. In a good-looking street leading from Merrion Square, and in which there were many handsome houses, we observed one destitute of windows, and tenantless; conveying the impression that there had been no encouragement to keep it in repair, and that it was not worth while either to rebuild or to remove it.

At the western extremity of Dublin, on the north side of the river, is the celebrated public promenade, denominated the Phoenix Park, said to consist of about a thousand acres. Not only does this park greatly exceed those of London in extent, but it is questionable if even the Regent's Park, after all the expense incurred in ornamenting it, will ever match this domain in beauty. The ground is of an undulating character, and is covered with groups of fine old timber and shrubbery, amidst which are the domestic residences of the Lord Lieutenant and his principal officers, besides some other public buildings, and a tall obelisk in honour of the Duke of Wellington's victories. A zoological garden has lately been added to the other attractions of the Park. It is needless to remark, that the right of *entré* to so large a piece of ornamented ground is a privilege, which those who daily or weekly enjoy are never the most apt to appreciate. It is greatly to be wished that the inhabitants of all other large towns possessed the like.

Among the other sights of Dublin, the halls of the Mendicity Society form, if not one of the most pleasing, at least one of the most peculiar. It is the business of this society to clear the streets as far as possible of beggars, by affording that abject class of society shelter and food, but only during the day. When the present writer visited the institution in September 1836, there were nearly two thousand persons of various sexes and ages accommodated by the society, the men and women engaged in such manual labours as could be most conveniently practised in such a place, and the children undergoing a course of school tuition. The windowed and loopholed wretchedness of these poor creatures, and the marks of low vitality in their countenances, pleaded powerfully for the establishment of some regular and fixed system by which the poor of Ireland should be assured of support. The food provided by the society was manifestly of the meanest kind, and yet so precarious are the funds furnished by the benevolent, that, the week after our visit, the society announced itself nearly bankrupt, and threatened, by shutting its doors, to turn the full tide of mendicancy once more loose over the city. But we shall have more to say respecting the state of the poor in Ireland.

Dublin was formerly a busy literary mart, in consequence of the state of the copyright law, which allowed of cheap reprints of British books being here issued. After a long Gothic interval, the activity of its publishers has lately revived, and there are at least three houses—those of Messrs Wakeman, Curry and Company, and Cumming—which afford considerable encouragement to native talent. The second of these houses has had the merit of for the first time establishing a respectable periodical work in Ireland: many of our readers must be aware of the talent displayed in the Dublin University Magazine, which has now been carried on with increasing success for upwards of four years. Owing to the peculiar circumstances of Ireland, the cheap style of publication does not as yet experience the same prosperity. The Dublin Penny Journal, a remarkably well conducted work, full of attractive literary matter, and embellished with wood engravings, from which much benefit to the humbler classes was to have been expected, has recently been discontinued—it is understood, for want of sufficient encouragement.

The number of light private vehicles in Dublin is one of its most remarkable distinctive features. These are generally of the kind called cars, drawn by one horse, and having a seat on each side, admitting of two or more persons sitting with their faces outwards. To keep a car is one of the highest aims of the ambition of a Dublin tradesman; and many of that class do keep their car, though said to be ill able to afford the expense. The kind, frank, and hospitable character of the Dublin citizens, is said to have just this unfortunate drawback, that it is often indulged at the expense of prudence. And yet it would appear that this ancient charge against them is not so just now as it once was. "Previous to the Union," says an intelligent volume, which we have consulted with advantage, "Dublin was the constant residence of 271 temporal and spiritual peers, and 300 members of the House of Commons. At present about half a dozen peers, and fifteen or twenty members of the House of Commons, have a settled dwelling within its precincts. Other persons of this exalted class of society, whom business or amusement may draw to the capital occa-

sionally, take up their residence at the hotels, which are numerous in the city. The resident gentry of Dublin now amount to about 2000 families, including clergymen and physicians, besides nearly an equal number of lawyers and attorneys, who occasionally reside there. The families engaged in trade and commerce are calculated at about 5000, and the whole may yield a population of 60,000, or 70,000 in the higher and middle ranks of society. The change which has taken place, though injurious to commercial prosperity, has perhaps in an equal proportion proved beneficial to public morals; the general character of the inhabitants, which was once gay and dissipated, has now become more serious and religious, and those sums formerly lavished on expensive pleasures, are now happily converted to purposes of a more exalted nature. Formerly there were seven theatres well supported; at present the only one which remains is frequently thinly attended. Club-houses and gaming-tables are nearly deserted; and even among the lower classes, vice of every kind has visibly diminished." *

THE LOST FLOWERS,

A SCOTTISH STORY.

IT was a beautiful morning in May, when Jeanie Gray, with a small bundle in her hand, took her leave of the farm-house of Drylaw, on the expiration of her half-year's term of service. She had but a short distance to walk, the village of Elsingston, about three miles off, being her destination. As she passed down the little lane leading from the farm to the main road, two or three fair-haired children came bounding over a stile to her side, and clung affectionately around their late attendant. "Oh, Jeanie, what for maun you gang away? Mamma wadna let us see you out on the road a bit, but we wan away to you by rinnin' round the stack-yard." Jeanie stood still, as the eldest of her late charges spoke thus, and said, "Marian, you should have had maire sense than to come when your mother forbade you. Rin away back, like gude bairns," continued she, caressing them kindly; "rin away hame. I'll maybe come and see you again." "Oh, be sure and do that then, Jeanie," said the eldest. "Come back again, Jeanie," cried the younger ones, as they turned sorrowfully away.

From such marks of affection, displayed by those who had been under her care, our readers may conceive that Jeanie Gray was possessed of engaging and amiable qualities. This was indeed the case; a more modest and kind-hearted creature, perhaps, never drew the breath of life. Separated at an early age from her parents, like so many of her class—that class so perfectly represented in the character of Jenny, in the Cottar's Saturday Night—she had conducted herself, in the several families which she had entered, in such a way as to acquire uniformly their love and esteem. Some mistresses, it is true, are scarcely able to appreciate a good and dutiful servant, and of this class was Mrs Smith of Drylaw, a cold, haughty, mistrustful woman, who, having suffered by bad servants, had come to look upon the best of them as but sordid workers for the penny-farthing. To such a person, the timidity and reserve which distinguished Jeanie Gray's character to a fault, seemed only a screen, cunningly and deliberately assumed; and the proud distance which Mrs Smith preserved, prevented her from ever discovering her error. Excepting for the sake of the children, therefore, it is not to be wondered at that Jeanie felt no regret at leaving Drylaw.

Her destination, on departing from her late abode, was, as we have already mentioned, the village of Elsingston, and it is now necessary that we should divulge a more important matter—she was going there to be married. Jeanie Gray could not be called a beautiful girl, yet her cheerful though pale countenance, her soft dark eye and glossy hair, and her somewhat handsome form, had attracted not a few admirers. Her matrimonial fate, however, had been early decided; and the circumstances under which it was about to be brought to a happy issue, were most honourable to both parties interested. At the age of eighteen, Jeanie's heart had been sought and won by William Ainslie, a young tradesman in the neighbouring town. Deep was the affection that sprang up between the pair, but they combined prudence with love, and resolved, after binding themselves by the simple love-vows of their class, to defer their union until they should have earned enough to ensure them a happy and comfortable home. For six long years had they been true to each other, though they had met only at rare intervals during the whole of that period. By industry and good conduct, Wil-

* The Picture of Dublin. Dublin, W. Curry, Jun. and Company, 1835.

ian had managed to lay by the sum of forty pounds, a great deal for one in his station; and this, joined with Jeanie's lesser earnings, had encouraged them to give way to the long-cherished wishes of their hearts. A *bul-and-a-ben*, or a cottage with two apartments, had been taken and furnished by William, and the wedding was to take place on the day following the May term, in the house of the bride's sister-in-law.

We left Jeanie Gray on her way from the farmhouse of Drylaw. After her momentary regret at parting with the children, whom the affectionate creature dearly loved, as she was disposed to do every living thing around her, her mind reverted naturally to the object that lay nearest her heart. The bright sun above sent his cheering radiance through the light fleecy clouds of the young summer, the revivified trees cast their shades over her path, the merry lark rose leapingly from the fields, and the sparrow chirruped from the hedge at her side—every thing around her breathed of happiness and joy, and her mind soon brightened into unison with the pleasing influences. Yet ever and anon a flutter of indescribable emotion thrilled through the maiden's heart, and made her cheeks, though unseen, vary in hue. At an angle of the road, while she was moving along, absorbed in her own thoughts, a manly voice exclaimed, "Jeanie!" and a well-known form started up from a seat on the wayside. It was William Ainslie. The converse which followed, as the betrothed pair pursued their way, and laid open their hearts to each other, we cannot, and shall not, attempt to describe.

After Jeanie had parted for a time with William, and was seated quietly in her sister-in-law's house, a parcel was handed in to her from a lady in whose service she had formerly been. On being opened, it was found to contain some beautiful artificial flowers, which the lady destined as a present to adorn the wedding-cap; an ornament regarding which, brides among the Scottish peasantry are rather particular. The kindness displayed in the gift, more than its value, affected Jeanie's heart, and brought tears to her eyes. She fitted the flowers to her cap, and was pleased to hear her sister-in-law's praises of their beautiful effect. Fatal present!—but let us not anticipate.

The wedding came and passed, not accompanied with boisterous mirth and uproar, but in quiet cheerfulness, for William, like his bride, was peaceful in his tastes and habits. Let the reader then suppose the festive occasion over in decent order, and the newly married pair seated in their new house—their *own* house—at dinner, on the following day. William had been at his work that morning as he was wont, and his young wife had prepared their humble and neat dinner. Oh! how delicious was that food to both! Their happiness was almost too deep for language. Looks of intense affection and tenderness were its only expression. "I maun be truant, Jeanie, to-night," said the husband. "My comrades in the shop maun ha'e a foy frae me, since we couldna ask them a' to the wedding, ye ken." "Surely," said his wife, raising her timid, confiding eyes to his face, "whatever you think right, William; I ken you are nae waster, and they wad ha'e shown the same kindness to you." "I hope you'll find me nae waster," returned her husband smiling; "nor am I fear'd for you turning out nae either, Jeanie lass, though you was see very braw about the head last night." By the direction of his eyes to the artificial flowers which had adorned her wedding-cap, and which were lying on the top of her new stand of drawers at the moment, Jeanie saw to what her husband alluded. "Oh, the flowers!" said she, blushing; "they didna cost me muckle, William."

The conversation of the pair was at this moment interrupted by the entrance of Mrs Smith of Drylaw, who mentioned, with an appearance of kindness, that, having been accidentally in Elsington that day, she had thought it her duty to pay a friendly visit to Jeanie and her goodman. Whether curiosity had fully as much share in bringing about the visit as friendly feeling, it matters not. Jeanie and William received her as became her rank, and the relation in which the former had lately stood regarding her. Bread and cheese were brought out, and she was pressed to taste a drop of the best liquor they possessed.

Alas, how sudden are the revolutions in human affairs! The party were in the midst of an amicable conversation, when Mrs Smith's eye happened to be caught by the bouquet on the top of the drawers, and a remarkable change was at once observable in her manner. "Jeanie," said she, with deep emphasis and rising anger, "I did not expect to find my flowers lying there—say not a word—I see it all—I see it all—you have been a *thief*—there is the evidence of it—I shall not stay another instant in your house!"

So saying, the infuriated and reckless woman rushed from the dwelling of the wonder-stricken pair. Jeanie, as already mentioned, was timid and modest to a fault. When her late mistress thus addressed her, she motioned to speak, but could not, though the blood rushed to her face, and her bosom heaved convulsively. When left alone with her husband, she turned her eyes wildly towards him, and a flood of tears gushed over her cheeks. What thought William of all this? His emotion was scarcely less on hearing the accusation than his wife's; and recollecting her saying that the flowers cost her nothing, alas! he feared that the charge was but too true. The more than feminine delicacy

and timidity of his wife's nature was not fully known to him, and her voiceless agitation appeared too like an inability to confute the imputation. He rose, and while Jeanie, still incapable of utterance, could only hold up her hands deprecatingly, he cast on her a glance of mingled sorrow and rebuke, and left the room. His wife—his bride—stricken in the first flush of her matronly joy and pride, sunk from her chair on his departure—insensible!

It was rather late, from a cause that has been alluded to, before William Ainslie returned to his home that night. His wife had retired to rest, but her sister-in-law, who had been sent for by Jeanie, was in waiting for him, and revealed the utter falsehood of Mrs Smith's accusation, she having been an eye-witness of the receipt of the flowers, as a present from another lady. "Take care o' Jeanie, William," said the sister-in-law; "she is ill—a charge o' that kind is enough to kill her." This prediction unhappily had truth in it. On the ensuing morning, the young wife was raving incoherently, in a state between slumber and waking. A deep flush remained permanently upon her countenance, most unlike the usual fairness of her complexion. Her muttered exclamations shocked her husband to the soul. "Oh, William, you believed it! But it's no true—it's no true—it is false!" was the language she continually murmured forth.

Medical skill was speedily seen to be necessary, and the surgeon who was called in informed William, that, in consequence of strong excitement, incipient symptoms of brain-fever had made their appearance. The utmost quiet was prescribed, and blood withdrawn from the temples in considerable quantity. For a time, these and other remedies seemed to give relief, and the poor husband never left the side of the sufferer. Indeed, it seemed as if she could not bear him to be absent; her mind always reverting, when he was out of her sight, to the idea that he believed the charge which had been made against her, and had left her for ever. The oft-repeated assurances to the contrary, from his own lips, seemed at length to produce conviction, for she at last was silent on the subject. But the charge—the blow—had struck too deep. Jeanie Ainslie—if we may call her by a name she was destined so short a time to bear—fell after two or three days' illness into a state of stupor, which continued with short and rare intervals, and on the eighth day after her nuptials, her pure spirit departed.

William Ainslie had shown on many occasions in life great firmness and self-command, and now, though deep suffering was written on his brow, he made, with at least external composure, the requisite preparations for laying in the grave the remains of her whom he had loved so long and so truly. As to retribution upon the head of the person who had been instrumental, through inconsiderate hastiness only, it is to be hoped, in producing his misery, the bereaved husband thought not of calling for it. Yet it did come, to a certain extent; for our errors seldom pass, even in this life, without a pang of punishment and remorse.

Several days after charging the innocent Jeanie with the abduction of her flowers, Mrs Smith of Drylaw found, by a discovery of her new servant, that one of her younger children, impatient for the flowering of a rose-bush in the little garden nigh the farm-house, had lighted upon the artificial bouquet in her mother's dressing-room, and had carried it out and stuck it upon the bush. There the flowers were accordingly found, and Mrs Smith, who was far from being an evil-intentioned woman, did feel regret at having charged the loss upon the guiltless. Ignorant of all that had passed at Elsington in the interval, she determined to call at William Ainslie's on her first visit to the village, and explain her mistake.

That call was made two days after Jeanie's death; and on Mrs Smith entering the room, she found William sitting by his bereaved hearth, with his sister-in-law, and another kind neighbour, bearing him company. "Oh—by the bye—those flowers!" said the unwelcome visitor in a tone and in a manner which she meant to be condescending and insinuating, "how sorry I am for what happened about those flowers! Where do you think I found them after all?—in a rose-bush in the garden, where Jemima had put them. And now I am come to say I am sorry for it, and hope that it will be all over."

William Ainslie had risen slowly during this extraordinary speech; and now, raising his finger towards his lips, he approached and took Mrs Smith by the hand, beckoning at the same time to the two women who were seated with him. They seemed intuitively to comprehend his wishes, and rising, moved towards the bed, around which the curtains were closely drawn, William leading forward also the unresisting and bewildered visitor. The women drew the curtains aside, and William, fixing his eyes on Mrs Smith, pointed silently to the body of his wife, shrouded in the ceremonials of death, and lying with the pale uncovered face upturned to that heaven for which her pure life had been a fitting preparation. The wretched and false accuser gazed with changing colour on the corpse of the dead innocent, and, turning her looks for a moment on the silent faces around, that regarded her more in sorrow than in anger, she uttered a groan of anguish as the truth broke on her; then, bursting from the hand which held her, she hastily departed from the house.

There is little now to add to this melancholy story, which, unhappily, is but too true. The little we have to add, is but in accordance with the tenor of what

has been told. After the burial of his Jeanie, William Ainslie departed from Elsington; and what were his future fortunes no one can tell, for he never was seen or heard of again in his native place. As for the unhappy woman who was the occasion of the lamentable catastrophe which we have related, she still lives to deplore the rashness of which she was guilty. Let us hope that the circumstance will have an influence on her future conduct, and be not without its moral efficacy in the minds of our readers.

THE NESTS OF BIRDS.

SECOND ARTICLE.

LET US now advert to that class of birds who overset their nests, and have been termed dome-builders. The wren tribe are especial artists in the dome department. The common wren builds in trees sheltered by ivy, the thatch of cottage-walls, beneath an overhanging turf on a bank, or, in short, in any spot almost where the shelter is good. On the wall, tree, or turf, which it selects, the wren generally makes an outline of the future nest, by glueing with saliva small bits of moss to the support; to these it attaches others, until a hemispherical cavity is constructed, about twenty times the bulk of the architect. A small oval hole in the side serves for the entrance, and the interior is lined with hair, feathers, down, or moss of a peculiarly soft kind. The dome above is nicely arched, and altogether the nest is of the warmest order of habitations. Does the little creature, in building a house so large, when compared with her own bulk, foresee that she is to have a numerous offspring? Such is indeed the case; the wren sometimes laying no less than eighteen eggs. Thus the large house, whatever the faculty may be that guides her to its construction, is all required in the end, when the careful mother comes to sit in it with her plenteous brood.

Some writers have taken it upon them to pity the wren for having the heavy task of rearing so many young ones, and, say they, in the dark too. The observation is entirely erroneous; for, as another naturalist remarks, any one who compares the window with the house will see that it is as well lighted as any palace in the kingdom. And as to the number of her family, she is proud of them, and would contrive to feed them were they twice as many.

A very beautiful specimen of dome-building is seen in the nest of the American yellow-throat, which constructs a dome of dead leaves, bound together with dry grass and lined with hair. Another domed nest is thus described by Wilson:—"This warbler (the solitary sylvia) builds its habitation in a thick tussock of long grass, sometimes sheltered by a briar-bush. It is built in the form of an inverted cone or funnel, the bottom thickly bedded with dry beach leaves, the sides formed of the dry bark of strong weeds, and lined with fine dry grass. These materials are not placed in the usual manner, circularly, but shelving downwards on all sides from the top; the mouth being wide, the bottom very narrow, filled with leaves, and the eggs or young occupying the middle."

Several other species of wren, besides that we have mentioned, are dome-builders, and it is wonderful in what odd corners some of them will locate themselves. Wilson relates that a mower, having hung up his coat in a shed, on trying to put it on after the lapse of two or three days, found the arm filled with what he conceived to be rubbish, but which, on extracting it, he discovered to be a wren's nest, completely finished. "In his retreat from the spot," says the agreeable naturalist, "the mower was followed by the little forlorn proprietors, who scolded him with great vehemence for thus ruining the whole economy of their household affairs." How delightfully the bird-fanciers write—Wilson, Audubon, and the rest!

The sparrow, occasionally, and the water-crow, overset their habitations, but the magpie is superior to them all in this line. Considerable discrepancy exists in the descriptions of the magpie's nest by different writers, but this may be readily accounted for by the fact that the bird adapts itself to circumstances. An old writer says that the nest is a large globe with two openings, one for going in, and one for going out. As this does not appear a very feasible way of accounting for the double hole, another naturalist declares that the second passage is for the tail of the bird when hatching. These things are not observed by modern ornithologists. The nest of the magpie, now-a-days, is a basket-work of sticks, lined with fine roots interwoven, and crowned by a dome of blackthorn twigs, laid crosswise, and raised to a considerable height above the nest. This dome is for the most part attached to branches overhanging the structure. One pair of magpies, observed by the Rev. John Hall, had taken up their dwelling in a gooseberry bush, which they occupied for several consecutive summers, and which they had by degrees entrenched so strongly that the nest could neither be injured by man or beast. The materials, says the clergyman, in the inside of the nest were warm and comfortable, but all on the outside so rough, so strong and firmly entwined with the bush, that without a hedgebill, or something of the kind, even a man could not get at the brood.

The bottle-tit, or bottle-tom, as the bird is provin-

cially named, builds a nest shaped like an obliquely everted bottle, with an entrance from below. The widest part of the nest is a lofty dome, which merely wants a glazed window to make it perfect. The light, however, of bottle-tom's house, comes by the door below; the nest altogether is most artfully constructed.

We must now turn to the platform-building birds, who are a class not less distinct, though scarcely so ingenious as those which have been described. A platform-building bird departs from the usual manner of constructing nests, in as far as it lays its eggs upon a flat, and not in a cup. Birds of prey, whose nests are placed in lofty situations, where no injury can befall their eggs or young from the assaults of other animals, require, it is obvious, to expend no care in the construction of their habitations, and accordingly we find that some of them hatch their eggs on the bare rock. The martial eagle of Southern Africa, a creature of such strength that it preys on antelopes and carries off hares, erects on the top of mountain trees, or on elevated cliffs, a flat platform, so thick and strong that it will bear the weight of a man. The whole is about four or five feet in diameter, and two feet in height. It is composed of strong rafters, interwoven with smaller branches, and covered with moss, leaves, or other soft materials.

Other birds of the eagle tribe construct nests in a similar way, some of which are placed on trees, and measure not less than six feet in height, and four in diameter, thus compensating the want of concavity by extent of surface. The fish-hawk of America, or asprey, is a platform-builder. The nests are described by Wilson as existing on the tops of decayed trees, and as large enough to be seen from the distance of half a mile, and heavy enough to be a good cart-load for one horse. Herons, though they make a slight depression in the middle of their nests, are still, properly speaking, platform-builders. The esteem in which the flesh of the heron was held, caused the artificial assemblage of these birds in certain quarters, a heronry being a valuable adjunct to a noble or royal establishment. A number of them still exist, though the reputation of heron-flesh has died away. Their nests have nothing remarkable in them, being simply masses of irregularly piled sticks. The stork and the crane are platform-builders, as is also the pigeon, in all its varieties, if we hold a flat pile of sticks as constituting a platform. In the case of the eagle and other large birds, we can see an adaptation to circumstances in their flat nests; but in the case of the pigeon, it is difficult, we own, to see a reason. The reason, doubtless, exists, but we are short-sighted.

Let us now look at a class of birds, more interesting than the preceding, namely, the felt-makers. The felt-workers *card* the materials of their nests, as it were, into one mass, differing in this from the weaver-birds and others, who unite hair by hair, and thread by thread. So perfect are the felt-making bird's operations, working as he does with the finest of wool, cotton tufts, &c., that he produces a nest so smooth and beautiful, that no bather would be ashamed of the work. The first bird of the felt-working order which we shall notice, is the pine-pine of Southern Africa. The exterior of this bird's nest is extremely beautiful, being either of a snowy white colour, or delicate brown, according to the quality of the down in the neighbourhood. The form of the outside is sometimes marred by its being adapted to the shape of the shrub branches where it is placed, but a glimpse into the interior soon shows that the outside is not irregular, because the pine-pine wants an eye for symmetry; for the nest is finely rounded within, and is spacious and roomy in the under part, with a narrow neck by which the bird glides into the interior. "One is surprised," says Vaillant, "that so small a creature, without other instrument than its bill, its wings, and tail, could have wrought vegetable down in such a manner as to render it as united, and of as fine a texture, as cloth, even of good quality." At the base of the neck, or corridor, is hollowed out a perch, in which it has been thought the male takes his seat, and watches by peeping over the nest, that no impending danger may come unawares on his mate, as she sits on her eggs in the bottom of their roomy home. If this be a true conjecture, it is as agreeable an example of foresight as can well be imagined, but we are compelled to say that it is at best doubtful.

The nest of the capocier, another native of Africa, is described by Vaillant as "a beautiful edifice, white as snow, and nine inches in height on the outside, while in the inside it was not more than five. Its external form was very irregular, on account of the enclosing branches; but the inside exactly resembled a pullet's egg placed with the small end upwards. Its greatest diameter was five inches, and the smallest four. The entrance was two-thirds or more of the whole height as seen on the outside, but within it almost reached the ceiling above. The interior of the nest was so neatly worked and felted together, that it might have been taken for a piece of fine cloth, a little worn, the tissue being so compact and close that it would have been impossible to detach a particle of the materials without tearing the texture to pieces; yet this was only effected by the process which I have already described; and it must be confessed that it was a work truly admirable, considering the instruments of the little mechanics."

Among British birds, indigenous and naturalised, the goldfinch, canary, and humming-bird, are felt-makers. Perhaps the chaffinch may be considered a

better artist than any of these. This little bird works chiefly in wool, as indeed all the felt-workers prefer to do, seeing that no other substance is capable of matting so closely, either by itself or with other materials. The chaffinch strengthens the inner fabric of felt-work, by binding the whole round with dry grass stems, upon the same principle which leads the hat-maker to bind the rim of a hat. Bands of moss, felted with wool, are wound also by the bird around the branches or twigs of the hawthorn or other tree which it has chosen for the site of its mansion. The cage canary, if supplied with various stufts to construct its nest, chooses fine down, generally, in preference to other materials; though in a state of nature, perhaps, it would, at different stages of the work, be inclined to use different articles. Soft hair, for example, seems to be the inner lining which most of the felt-makers prefer.

Let us now say a word or two about the cementers. We have in some measure anticipated our observations on this class of operatives, in describing some birds, and particularly the swallow and other mason-birds, as employing their saliva in fixing the clay materials of their dwellings. The subject, however, has not yet been done justice to, and we hope to convince our readers that the proper cementing birds are well entitled to a separate notice. Read in proof of this the following description of the American chimney swallow:—"The nest of this bird is of singular construction, being formed of very small twigs, fastened together with a strong adhesive glue or gum which is secreted by two glands, one on each side of the hind head, and mixes with the saliva. With this glue, which becomes as hard as the twigs themselves, the whole nest is thickly besmeared. The nest itself is small and shallow, and attached by one side or edge to the wall, and is totally destitute of the soft lining with which the nests of other swallows are so plentifully supplied." Our readers will perceive from this account that the accurate Wilson strongly bears out the assignment of a separate class to the cementers, by the opinion, founded no doubt on dissection, that they are supplied with a distinct fluid, secreted for the purpose of acting as a cement.

The ground-builders are a class of birds which it does not appear necessary to devote much space to. Ducks and other domestic fowls are ground-builders, as is also the pretty little red-breast, whose nest is perhaps the best specimen of the skill of this class. Robin generally selects the root of a bush or hedge, where, under the shelter of some overhanging grass or weed, the bird lays a solid foundation of moss, and then intertwining moss, hair, and grass, constructs a neat and rounded dwelling. It has been averred that the red-breast hath the art to cover the nest with an arch-work, and to strew leaves over this, only a little doorway being left. Those who have seen this pleasant bird's home, know how neatly the surrounding grass conceals it; but we are afraid that few have ever observed this cunning strewing of leaves. The social habits of the bird have been long the theme of song. He is perhaps capable of being more easily rendered tame than any other individual of the feathered race.

Parasite birds, or those who seize upon the dwellings of others, are of a mixed character. Proper parasite birds not only use the nests of other birds for depositing their eggs, but having done this, they depart, and leave their offspring to the care of the true proprietor of the nest on which they had intruded. Of this class the cuckoo is a well-known example. The other order of parasites take possession of the premises built by more industrious birds, and retain that possession throughout for hatching and breeding, the true owner being permanently ejected. Of this class the house-sparrow is a specimen. The bank-swallow's nest is that which he most frequently seizes on, from inability to build a nest, but apparently from a hurried anxiety to procure a shelter and home. The swallow, the house-wren, and several other birds, belong to the same class of parasites with the house-sparrow.

The cuckoo's proceedings are of a much more interesting nature, and with some notice of them we shall conclude our observations on the nests of birds. The cuckoo's practices have been long known to mankind, being described by Aristotle and Pliny, though in some points these naturalists fell into mistakes. They relate that the cuckoo lays in a nest which she has not herself built, and that she moreover eats the eggs of the true proprietor. Certain it is that the cuckoo deposits her egg, for she has generally but one, in another bird's nest, but it is injustice to say that she eats the eggs which she finds there. The truth of the matter seems to be as follows:—The cuckoo, from unknown causes, builds no habitation, but searches for a nest, often a hedge-sparrow's, in which she leaves her egg. The sparrow hatches the whole, and is apparently unconscious that there is a dangerous stranger in the nest. Then does the young cuckoo, almost as soon as it is hatched, as was observed by Dr Jenner, deliberately tumble her companions out of the nest one by one. There seems to be an innate consciousness in the little creature that its true parent has left it to the care of a bird too small to feed more than one, and it soon clears itself of all rivals. This was proved by Dr Jenner, by putting several eggs into the nest, when the young cuckoo in a short time tumbled them out. Indeed, where two eggs have been laid by the cuckoo, one of the young must perish. After turning out the young sparrows, the cuckoo instantly attack each other, and one of them is ejected. The

poor dupe, the old hedge-sparrow, proud of having so large a young one, tends it with extreme care.

Whatever may be the reason of the old cuckoo's unnatural conduct, here we find its young preserved by a curious instinct, though at the expense of others. Dr Jenner even thinks that a remarkable depression in the back of the newly-hatched cuckoo is a provision for enabling it to *back out* the sparrow's eggs, or the young sparrows. We have said that this turning out depends on an instinct, because the young cuckoo does not defer the deed until it feels an inconvenient want of room, but begins to the task almost the instant it is hatched, and often turns out the sparrow young in the egg.

These be strange things, and meet for man, with all his reason, to ponder on.

TIME-STEALERS.

TIME is said to be money, but we doubt if many believe it; few at least seem to be aware of the value of the article, considering the manner it is thrown away, or the manner in which it is stolen from friends, neighbours, and acquaintances. Time-stealers are the very pests of society. They abound in all small towns, and are pretty numerous in every city in the empire. They are not all idlers. Possibly, they pursue professions, and are themselves the objects of plunder to others; nevertheless, that does not prevent them from stealing *your* time, provided they can lay hold of it. They are cunning, and wait for opportunities. They have ends to serve—they are great advice-seekers—and what do they care for robbing you of half an hour, if it suit their necessities or convenience? Time-stealers are certainly born without a conscience. We have known them commit a robbery of an hour with the most consummate coolness. No matter how you are engaged, how busy you are, or how onerous and incessant are your duties, there is their horrid rap at the door, or their distracting ring at the bell. They wish to see you for only a single moment: it is an affair of some importance (to them no doubt), and they will not detain you a minute, and so forth; all which is, of course, a pretence to get themselves edged into your privacy, and give you a world of botheration about nothing.

It is a sad thing to possess the reputation of a person who is supposed to be able to clear up difficulties in history, law, science, or any other department of learning, to solve riddles, or give answers on any subject or matter whatsoever. Those who labour under so unlucky a character, at once become the properly accredited counsel of all the stupid people within a hundred miles or more of their residence. We chance to know several gentlemen who are placed in something like the predicament we speak of. They tell us they are the unfortunate victims of all descriptions of time-stealers and advice-hunters. One is a clergyman, learned in ecclesiastical history, who mentions that he receives on an average one dozen post letters, and half a dozen calls a day—the writers and callers all making inquiry in the most polite manner possible, upon some abstruse point or other which they would wish to be informed upon—not one of the letters, be it remarked, being post-paid; such a trifling as paying postage being far below the notice of your thorough time-stealers and advice-seekers, who consider you to be highly honoured by being considered a repository of knowledge worthy of consultation. We often pity the poor but kind-hearted gentleman whose time is so much the subject of indiscriminate pillage. Another of our acquaintances, who has the misfortune to be thought at once learned in his profession, and benevolent in disposition, is a lawyer. Every day, as he informs us, is he beset with time-stealers, who flock to him for a word of gossip or advice. In vain does he tell Betty to say that he is engaged: they waylay him. In vain he flies to the country: they find him out. He buries himself, as he, foolish man, thinks, in the recesses of an old castle in the most mountainous part of Lanarkshire, wishing to snatch a momentary repose in the family of a friend. Even in this out-of-the-way part of the world, however, is he beset, and worried. Every body within twenty miles of him comes seeking his advice. "Sir," says the aged footman, "there is a gentleman in the parlour who wishes to see you"—or, "Sir, there is a man in the lobby who wants to speak a word to you, but he says he is in no hurry; he will wait your convenience." Thus, one succeeds another. All are anxious to pick up gratuitously "a word of advice" on their several cases of complaint or litigation. The visit of the Edinburgh lawyer is, therefore, too good a thing to be lost. It must be made the most of. To let such an opportunity escape would be "even-down nonsense."

Medical men are, we believe, in a similar manner the objects of ceaseless persecution. Their time is stolen on all hands, and perhaps with more indifference than in the case of any others. But all that they suffer in this respect is nothing to the encroachments which are made on the time of various editors of public prints. These unhappy personages are considerably supposed to be "every body's body." No one can go wrong in applying to them. They know every thing. There is not a transaction which has taken place since the days of Adam, but they can speak upon. They know what is going on in all parts of the earth. They can give you a precise account of every spot on the habitable globe. In short, it is believed there is no limit to the range of their information. And all that they know is at the service of any one who is pleased to write to them or call upon them. This is the amusing part of the business. Letters pour in upon them in shoals, and it would require a porter to open and shut the door to visitors. "Sir, there is a gentleman wishes to see you." "What does he want?" "I don't know, sir, but he says he wishes to speak to you on some particular business." "Well, show him into a room." Thus prepared to enter upon some negotiation of importance, you leave off what you are engaged upon, and attend the gentleman who has the particular business to execute. Now for something of consequence. This can be no petty time-stealer. You enter upon the scene. A smartly well-dressed man, rather below middle age, and with a countenance beaming with indescribable blandness, meets your eye. He speaks: "I am Mr Barnes from Yorkshire, sir; I have taken the liberty of calling upon you, sir, regarding a matter which I believe you will be able to give me some information about. There is a party of us, sir, and we are strangers. We wish to know from you, if it is not too much trouble, what places in this wonderful town of yours we should go to see; and, also, if you could point out any place in the neighbourhood worthy of our notice. We are likewise going northward in a few days—Oh, we are now staying at the Waterloo, a very good house, sir—and it would be obliging if you would favour us with a list of the towns, and mountains, and lakes, and all that sort of thing, you know, sir, which strangers usually go to see, sir. I am sorry for troubling you, sir, but, as I have read your paper for some years, sir, I thought I might take the liberty of calling upon you, sir"— &c. &c. &c. Here is a pretty outpouring of inquisitiveness! Here is a time-stealer with a vengeance!—a fellow whom we know nothing about, and who has the modest assurance to ask us to sit down and write, off-hand, no less than a whole "Tourist's Pocket Companion."

Visits of this nature, grotesque and improbable as they may appear from description, are, in sober truth, matters of almost every-day occurrence to persons whose names happen to be known in connection with newspapers and other kinds of periodicals. Nor are these impertinences confined to visits. A more modest class of time-stealers make their inquiries by letter, expecting to be answered in the "notices to correspondents." Thus the conductors of newspapers, besides attending to the balance of power in Europe, and studying the ebbs and flows of the great ocean of national opinion, are called every quarter of an hour to attend to matters the most ludicrously trifling—things which are learned by the half of mankind in the first two years of their schooling—things which could be ascertained by any gawky by merely opening an almanack or a street-directory—things about which almost any man would be ashamed to confess himself ignorant. We do not recollect ever enjoying a more hearty laugh, than when, sitting beside one of our most esteemed friends, the editor of a highly enlightened political journal, he handed to us a letter that had just been put into his hands, inquiring the steps requisite for obtaining the office of a serjeant of police.*

The English are accused by foreigners of being a churlish people. We never could see this. They only appear to be so from their deep appreciation of the value of time. They hate to be intruded upon

when busy, and that is what foreigners do not understand. A visit of friendship or ceremony to a merchant of a forenoon at his place of business, is little else than a piece of impudent intrusion, which few can either relish or forgive. But this is a point upon which thousands are totally ignorant. Perhaps they imagine, that because it is only for the space of five minutes they intend to occupy the time of one they think they have some claim upon, there will be no harm done by their visit, forgetting, what is a most obvious conclusion, that if all others have the same notion, the whole of a man's time may be profitlessly expended on a series of gossiping acquaintances. Let us hope, however, that our friends the time-stealers and advice-seekers will by and bye learn to set a greater value on the fleeting moments of existence, and not thoughtlessly squander them, for their own sake, let alone a regard for the property of others.

ROBERT DRURY.

THE adventures of Robert Drury, a British sailor boy, who was cast ashore on the island of Madagascar, and remained there in the condition of a slave for fifteen years, were given to the world by himself in the year 1729, after his escape, and return to his native land. The writer's veracity is supported in some important points by the testimony of others, yet the great body of his adventures, during his detention on the island, rests solely on his own declarations in his narrative. Throughout this, an air of truth, consistency, and probability, so strikingly runs, that the world in general has been inclined to credit the relation, especially as its author was an uneducated mariner, and not a Defoe, whose genius could throw over a fable the likeness and colouring of truth.

Robert Drury evinced in his boyhood an ardent liking for the sea, which his father, a respectable tavern keeper in London, reluctantly consented to indulge; and the youth, in his fourteenth year, was placed on board an East India vessel, the Degrave, William Young, captain. The Degrave performed her voyage safely to Bengal, but received an unnoticed injury in leaving that station, which forced the captain to touch at the Mauritius, and examine into the cause of the leak. This they either did not discover, or could not rectify, though, having got an addition of hands, they imagined that the pumps might preserve the ship until they reached the Cape of Good Hope. Here they mis-calculated sadly; the leak, notwithstanding the guns and other heavy articles were thrown overboard, increased so much, that the crew requested the captain to run the vessel on shore at all hazards, the island of Madagascar being then within a short distance. One sailor knew the coast, and informed his companions that it was inhabited by people who were mortal enemies to the whites. Inevitable death, however, awaited them at sea; and the crew, coasting along the shore a short way in order to land at a distance from the obnoxious place, which was named Port Dauphine, attempted to force the ship on shore. This they could not entirely effect, and were necessitated to abandon the means of the boats and a raft.

Two men and one woman only were lost, and the party, amounting to one hundred and sixty, found themselves, helpless, without arms, and without food, on a friendless and too probably hostile territory. A number of bales and boxes which had been thrown out of the ship, were driven ashore by the waves; and about two hundred negroes, attracted by these, came around the party and gave them a bullock, intimating by signs that it was for their eating. To their great surprise, an Englishman, named Sam, came to them next day, and told them he had been shipwrecked with several companions some months before. He had got into favour with the king of the district, though his companions were in confinement; and he announced that his majesty would visit the crew of the Degrave on the ensuing day. The king accordingly came, and informed the party through Sam that he was proud to have so many white men in his country, and that they must go with him to his capital. Fearing that this was merely a prelude to slavery, the crew were very reluctant to go, but, having no arms, they were compelled to acquiesce. After a three days' journey, during which they saw several mean-looking villages, they reached the king's residence, which was a town of mud huts, situated in a wood. His majesty was sitting on a mat at the door of his palace, with a great body of chiefs and men standing around, most of them armed with guns, pistols, and lances, when the shipwrecked party approached. The king gave them food, and a honey-drink called toake, and ordered them to be lodged partly within the town, and partly out of it. They met here the companions of whom Sam had spoken.

Hitherto we have not mentioned poor Drury, who, as may be conceived, was now repenting bitterly his obstinate passion for the sea. After staying in this town for some days, an event occurred, which Drury, then a lad of sixteen, did not know whether to anticipate good or evil from. He had the honour to gain the affections of one of the king's daughters, a lady of thirteen, who in her daily visits to gaze on the white men, felt compassion for the boy. This she communicated to him through Sam, and Drury might have been better treated in consequence, had not his com-

panions entered upon a scheme at the time, which altered the face of affairs altogether. The king had hinted his intention of dispersing them among his sons, throughout the villages of his territory, and this seemed to the Europeans the first step to hopeless captivity. They consulted together, and resolved to seize upon the king and his family in order to compel them to negotiate for a free departure. They seized accordingly the king and his son in his palace, with all the arms it contained, and took to the woods in the direction of the Manderra river, where trading vessels frequently touch. A pursuit immediately took place, and the negroes cajoled the king and his son from the party, by promising to retire. No such retreat took place; on the contrary, the miserable party were pursued hotly for several days, and their numbers lessened continually by the shots of the negroes. The small remnant that was left were cut off to a man at the crossing of Manderra river, with the exception of Drury and three lads about his own age, and five others who had deserted their companions on the previous night. The lance was at Drury's throat, but he was reserved to wait, as he understood, on the king's grandson.

The captive boys were separated, and Drury was put under the charge of a servant belonging to the prince who had taken him prisoner. After several days' travel, the party reached the town of which this prince was the governor. The treatment which the prisoner received here at first was rather encouraging, and we shall give it in his own words:—"When the party drew nigh to the town, one of the negroes blew upon a large shell, which sounded like a horn. This brought out all the women to a spacious house in the middle of the rest, about twelve feet high, which I soon perceived to be my master's. No sooner had he seated himself at the door, than his wife came crawling out on her knees till she came to him, and then licked his feet; and when she had thus testified her duty and respects, his mother paid him the compliment, and all the women in the town saluted their husbands in the same manner; then each man went to his respective habitation, my master's brother only excepted; who, though he had a house, had no wife to receive him, and so he staid behind. My mistress intimated by her motions that she would have me to go in and sit down. A great deal of serious discourse passed between my master and her; and though I knew nothing of what they said, yet by her looking so earnestly at me while he was talking, I conjectured he was relating our tragical tale to her, and I perceived that the tears stood frequently in her eyes." These tears were good omens respecting the lady's disposition, and so Drury found them. His mistress gave him milk and pulse (a grain like peas), and behaved always kindly to him. As soon as he had picked up a little of the language, he was set to herd his master's cattle, after they found that he either could not, or pretended that he could not, use the hoe in weeding a crop called caravans. The task of herding brought him in contact with several other boys, and he was tolerably comfortable; besides, his mistress kindly permitted him, during his master's absence on a war party, to have an interview with one of the white lads who had been spared at the same time with himself, and who lived under another master at the distance of five miles. This meeting, though short, gave both of them great pleasure.

Drury's master was named *Decan*, or Chief, Mevarrow, and was grandson to *Deean Crindo* (the king already mentioned), who was sovereign of the country. On *Dean Mevarrow's* return from war, the poor white slave was compelled, after narrowly escaping death for his conscientious repugnance, to kneel down after the negro fashion, and lick his master's feet. After performing this, Drury returned to his post of cow-keeper, which was sometimes troublesome, the cattle being active and powerful. They had humps between their shoulders, and were variously coloured, some of them being beautifully streaked, and others spotted. The sheep had large heavy tails, like the Cape sheep; hogs were numerous in the woods, and goats scanty.

Drury was once summoned to attend his master upon an occasion which inspired the poor prisoner with hope and joy. The five persons of the crew of the Degrave, who had left the rest on the night before the capture of Drury and the murder of the others, had succeeded in reaching Port Dauphine, the country of King Samuel, who, instead of being cruel to the whites, as had been said by one sailor on board of the Degrave, had turned out an especial friend, and, at the instigation of these five persons, had declared war against *Deean Crindo* for the recovery of Drury and any other whites who might be alive. *Dean Mevarrow* had been summoned to attend his grandfather, *Deean Crindo*, with all his men. *Mevarrow* took Drury with him, and joined the army of *Crindo*. King Samuel soon after entered his neighbour's territories, and a conference took place, at which it was proposed to give up Drury for a certain recompence. Alas! the captive heard the very voices of his friends, but some misunderstanding took place, and, after a skirmish between the armies, King Samuel, for some reason, withdrew his forces, and Drury was carried to his old abode by the *Deean Mevarrow*, who ordered him off to the plantations once more.

For a long time after this downfall of his hopes, Drury was perfectly spiritless. At length, however, he became more cheerful, and describes his manner of

* It is perhaps not generally known that a practice prevails among a certain class of thoughtless young men, of betting with each other that they will obtain answers to letters from persons of political or literary distinction. To procure personal interviews with such individuals, is of course a still more glorious object of attainment, and is consequently the subject of a higher wager. It is impossible to speak in severe enough terms of these paltry tricks, which can only have the effect of discrediting the persons so troubled from either answering the letters or permitting the visits of strangers.

life as being rather agreeable. The cattle were in the plantations, at a distance from the town, and each of the cow-herds had a piece of ground which they cultivated, besides several bee-hives of their own. By growing yams, and eating honey, they supported themselves, and their masters only visited the cattle rounds now and then. The cattle-tenders were mostly young lads, and lived in huts of their own construction. Many of them had a cow and calf as their private property, and, with the produce of their cows and their hives, they bought hatchets and other necessaries. The worst thing was their thefts from each other; but Drury, by playing a little on their superstition, contrived to keep his property secure.

Rebellion was now at hand in the kingdom of Deean Crindo. The whole territory was arbitrarily divided, it appears, into districts, over each of which a Deean, related to Crindo, held rule. These Deeans were continually stealing cattle from each other, and a quarrel arose on this score between Deean Mevarrow and one who was a son of Crindo, and consequently uncle to his adversary. Crindo took his son's part, and, when the quarrel spread to a serious extent, took the field in person. A nephew, whose father had held the throne before the present king, took advantage of this opportunity to claim the sceptre, as heir to Crindo's elder brother. A great disturbance followed among the Deeans, one joining the nephew's, and another the uncle's cause, while a few endeavoured to preserve neutrality. Mevarrow, Drury's master, took the side of the nephew, who was named Murnanzack. Crindo marched against the town of Mevarrow, and, to preserve some portion of his cattle, that Deean sent a number under Drury's guidance to the stronger territories of his ally, Deean Murnanzack.

This prince was of a generous temper, and held many familiar conversations with our hero, who, on one occasion, unfortunately was seized with a desire to harangue on religious subjects. We say unfortunately, because in attempting to enlighten the prince and a party of his followers with the Messianic account of man's creation, he ventured into assertions which drew down on him and his opinions much scorn. Having told them that woman was made by the Deity from the rib of the first man, he was saluted with shouts of laughter. "Why," said the prince, "then women must have one rib more than men." The poor white sailor asserted thoughtlessly that such was the case, and an old woman's ribs were immediately subjected to examination, when the numbers being found to be equal, the religion of the whites was declared to be absurd and false.

Drury was happier with this prince than with Mevarrow, but the latter sent at last, after a cessation of hostilities, for his white slave, and set him once more to the cow-herding. A curious custom among the natives was the means of making Drury's life more comfortable than formerly. Every ox must be killed by one of the royal family, else no one will eat the meat. Mevarrow and his brother found that this gave them sometimes troublesome journeys; they therefore gave out Drury as the son of a white captain, whose blood and rank is held by the islanders to be royal, like that of their own chiefs, and our hero got the task of killing the oxen of the smaller proprietors, for which the usual reward was a large slice.

The messenger who was sent by Deean Crindo to settle the terms of peace with Mevarrow, came to the town after Drury had returned home, and took a great fancy to him, offering to purchase him from his master. Mevarrow would not part with his slave, but the messenger had secret interviews with Drury, and directed him by what route to guide his steps, if he could escape during his master's absence at any time. An opportunity soon occurred, which forced his master to leave home, but Drury was ordered to go with him, and an event occurred which changed the captive's views altogether for a time. Mevarrow and his followers went on a war party, and Drury had the fortune to capture, with his own hands, the opposing prince's wife and daughter. The wife was dismissed, but the daughter was taken home, and the white man took her into his hut and made her his wife. His conduct had been so good on the expedition, that his master was generous to him, and gave him two cows. With these and the produce of his bees, he was enabled to maintain himself and his partner very comfortably, pursuing still his old occupation as cattle-herd.

How long, or rather how many years, Drury continued to live in this manner with his wife, does not appear; indeed, the whole-narrative, being drawn from memory, no dates could be expected in the work. He did, however, become as anxious to escape as formerly, and this anxiety was augmented by an enchantment to which the jealousy of Mevarrow subjected his captive. The natives, like all negroes, and indeed all savages, are very superstitious; every one, from the king to the slave, being the dupe of the omens or enchanter. One of these informed Mevarrow one day that Drury would escape, but that he might be placed under the influence of certain charms, which would bring disease upon him whenever he meditated departure. Mevarrow sent for Drury, and a solemn incantation was gone through by the old wrinkled wizard, at which the poor Englishman, ignorant as he was, smiled heartily in his sleeve. On second thoughts, however, the matter did not seem so worthy of disregard. He recollects that a day's illness in future, whatever might be the cause, would lay him under the suspicion of intending an escape, and that in all

probability he would in consequence be transfixed with a lance or shot like a dog.

Drury became so miserable that he resolved to attempt an escape, whatever might be the issue. His wife was the great obstacle, for he really loved her, though she had brought him no children, for which he was now thankful. He told her of his intentions, and the reasons for them, and the kind native kept his secret. His escape was at last made in the following manner:—He left a heifer in the fields on bringing home the cattle at night, and the want was immediately noticed by his master, who ordered him to rise early and search for the animal. This was what Drury expected. Having taken an affectionate leave the same night of his spouse, he started on his journey, proceeding, according to directions formerly given him, in a straight line for the territories of Deean Afferer, from whom he had been promised liberal treatment. In one day he travelled sixty miles, as he afterwards computed, and the Deean received him with great kindness. Mevarrow sent to reclaim him, but Afferer sent back the messengers with contempt, saying, "No white man is a slave; he is free with me to come and go as he chooses."

Drury found after a time that it was not Deean Afferer's intention to permit him to "go as he chose." Within this prince's territory he might roam as he chose, but on no account would his new master permit him to go to any other prince. He found, however, an opportunity to run away, and after a long travel reached the country of King Troongha, whom he had met during a war in which Afferer had been engaged. In this new place, which was on the sea-coast, he found several persons who could talk English, and though he shifted masters many times subsequently, he never was ill treated, but, on the contrary, was highly esteemed for his white colour. The people who could talk English had learned it, he found, chiefly from pirates, who had once been frequent visitors here.

After several years spent in comparative comfort, two English vessels, at last, to his great joy, touched at Young-Owl to trade, and to his still greater joy, found that his father had heard of his being supposed to be alive in Madagascar, and had given the captain orders to treat at whatever cost for his ransom, if he was found. After a little delay, he parted with all his island-friends, and embarked on board the Winchester, Captain Mackett, for England, where he arrived in September 1717. Robert Drury afterwards visited Madagascar in a trading capacity, and ultimately settled in a respectable post in the East India House in London.

His fifteen years' detention in this island made him an object of curiosity, and many visitors took pleasure in talking with him. He bore an uniformly respectable character, and died in possession of considerable property, honestly attained.

POISONING.

POISONING appears to have been a crime almost unknown to the Jews, but among the other nations of antiquity we find traces of it at a very early period. At the history, however, of these times is scarcely to be depended on, we shall descend to the era of Alexander for our first notice of the deadly practice. The danger in which monarchs then were placed from poison is very strongly evinced by the anecdote related of the Macedonian conqueror and his physician Philip. When the latter was administering a draught of medicine to Alexander, before swallowing it the hero handed to Philip a letter accusing him of an intention to give his patient poison. The calm and tranquil manner of the physician as he read the accusation, satisfied the monarch of his fidelity, and the draught was taken instantly. This anecdote exhibits the treachery which the best beloved kings often dreaded from their nearest attendants. The enemies of Alexander, the Persians, were, if we may believe Plutarch, celebrated for their skill and practice in the art of poisoning, as far at least as regarded their royal families. Poisoned meat, and poisoned table-knives, were generally the form in which the purpose was effected. Alexander, we may notice, though he escaped once, ultimately perished, according to the most authentic account, by poison at Babylon.

About the same era, we find the Greek republics employing poison, in inflicting the legal punishment of death on Socrates and others who fell unhappily into disfavour with the populace. The poison on such occasions seems to have been in the form of a capacious draught, composed of a decoction of narcotic herbs. But the Greeks had also poisons, which were fatal in very small quantities, as we learn from the circumstance of Demosthenes having carried his death-dose about with him in the hollow of his *stylus*, or pen. At a later period, Hannibal, the celebrated Carthaginian, killed himself by swallowing a substance kept concealed by him in a ring. What these poisons were, we have now no means of ascertaining. The most probable conjecture is, that the ancients had some way, unknown to us, of concentrating the strength of henbane, wolfsbane, or other narcotic plants.

The same remark applies to the Romans. They were in possession of poisons of great concentrated strength, the character of which we are now ignorant

of. In Rome, the law never had occasion to take cognisance of deaths by poison, until about two hundred years before Christ. The circumstances which then occurred are so frightful, that it is difficult to credit Livy, who relates them. He tells us, that, within a short time of each other, many persons of distinction in Rome fell sick and died. The disorder by which they suffered appeared to be the same in all the cases, and the general opinion of the citizens on the subject was, that an incipient pestilence had made its appearance. Still some degree of mystery hung over the matter, when a female slave presented herself before the Curule Aedile, who chanced to be Quintus Fabius Maximus, and informed him that she would reveal a secret relative to the late deaths, provided a free pardon for any share she herself had in the business was assured to her. The senate, to whom Fabius, with characteristic caution, first related the circumstance, granted the slave's request. On this the woman guided a body of senators and officers of justice to a place in the city, where they found, in a secret chamber, twenty of the noblest ladies of Rome around a cauldron, stirring and compounding poisons! To these murderous hags the recent deaths were owing; and a hundred and seventy more of Rome's fairest and highest ladies were found to be implicated in the same horrible transaction. The twenty who were found concording the fatal drink, on being charged with their guilt, asserted that they were preparing harmless medicines. "Drink them, then," said the senators. After a brief consultation among themselves, they all drank of the decoction and died. Their accomplices also were all condemned. The conduct of these women was attributed, by the awe-struck Romans, more to phrenzy than to depravity.

As Italy was the spot where the arts first started from their long sleep into beauty and life, so do we find the noxious art of poisoning adopting the same land as the scene of its resurrection. Pope Alexander VI., and his son Cesare Borgia, of infamous memory, having prepared poisoned wine for nine cardinals whom they had invited to dinner, by the mistake of a servant were served with the liquor themselves. The pope died, and the son barely escaped, by the strength of his constitution. Many very unfavourable stories of a similar character are related of the pontifical court of Rome, and certain it is that poisoning was carried to a dreadful extent in Italy during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. No better proof of this can be given than the history of a lady named Toffana, who was a native of Sicily, and ultimately resided in Naples. This lady was the maker and seller of a solution of arsenic, six drops of which were sufficient to kill a man. Toffana's drops were everywhere known throughout Italy, and in order to make them pass the custom-houses without check, the phial containing them was fashioned in imitation of a celebrated and much used drug termed the manna of St Nicholas. Such concealment could only be rendered expedient from the awful purpose to which the drops were applied—of taking away the human life. Some of these bottles still exist, and the great quantities Toffana is known to have issued (in consequence always of orders and applications), afford the strongest evidence on the score of Italian immorality and guilt in the seventeenth century. It is gratifying to know that the wretch Toffana at last fell under the notice of the law, lax as it was, and suffered for her crimes. Her confession brought to light the facts which have been stated.

In England we find several early cases of poisoning, though Lord Bacon says that it is not a crime to which the English are predisposed. Some black stains rest upon the memory of Leicester, Queen Elizabeth's favourite, whose character Sir Walter Scott has certainly depicted rather too favourably and leniently. An Italian secretary is said to have been the instrument of Leicester's crimes. His first reputed victim was Amy Robsart, his first wife, whose caution, however, prevented a sufficient dose being given to her, and so hurried Varney and Foster, under whose charge she was, to the adoption of other means. The second victim was Lord Sheffield, on whose wife the favourite had fixed his eyes, and whom, after her lord's death, he married. The marriage, however, was private, and Leicester never acknowledged it. On the contrary, in order to prevent its ever being divulged, he forced the lady to marry Sir Edward Stafford. This she did not do, until she saw that it was the only way to save her life; her hair and nails having fallen off by Leicester's practices to conquer her obstinacy. This story rests upon her own testimony, and is credited by Dugdale and Camden. The Cardinal Chatillon died at Canterbury, and, having incurred the favourite's hatred, he fell; it is believed, by poison. Sir Nicholas Throgmorton perished at Leicester's own table, and his dying words expressed a conviction that he was poisoned. The Earl of Sussex's death was attributed to the same hand, though there seems little foundation for the assertion. That these crimes are not laid to Leicester's charge without probability, is shown by the proposal, which, according to Camden, he made in open council, to get rid of Queen Mary of Scotland by poison.

The death of Sir Thomas Overbury by poison in the Tower of London brought to light a succession of practices, more resembling the wretched doings of Italy than of England. Five persons were executed for this affair, the most guilty of whom was a lady named Anne Turner, who exhibited the cool delibe-

rate wickedness of a fiend, lodged in a person radiant with youth and beauty. Two other accomplices of Anne Turner, namely, the Earl and Countess of Somerset, were shamefully pardoned by James I., though this was not their first offence. The countess had been married twice, and, by a long train of villainous arts, in concert with her second husband, had wasted away the bodily strength, and ultimately effected the death of the first, by mixing certain substances with his food, and surrounding him during sleep with noxious exhalations. Several physicians were abettors of these crimes, and their conduct showed that, if the general morality of England had sunk so low, which happily it did not, as to practise habitually such deeds, Toffanas would not have been wanting to supply the means. But, as Lord Bacon justly says, poisoning is not an English crime. It is remarkable that even the physicians at that time seem to have still considered, as was the belief in ancient times, that powdered spiders, portions of dried toads, hares' bones, &c. were poisonous; an idea now known to be altogether incorrect. Probably policy counselled the hags and wretches who prepared poisons, to affect to use such ingredients, in order to keep the matter in mystery, and to retain the employment of mixing in their own hands. This is the more probable, as we always find some one true poison amid the farrago of supposititious ones.

In the same reign, a very remarkable case of poisoning occurred in Scotland. David Erskine, head of the ancient house of Dun, died, leaving two sons in their boyhood, the eldest of whom was, of course, heir to the large estates of the family. Robert Erskine, uncle to the boys, at the instigation chiefly of his three sisters, Annas, Isabel, and Helen, administered poison to the nephews, which had been procured from an old woman who bore the character of a witch. On both of the boys the poison operated violently, though not immediately fatal. They vomited incessantly, became black in the face and skin, and the eldest, after a lingering and painful illness, died. Before his decease, being perfectly conscious of the practices from which he was suffering, and the quarter from which the blow came, he gave vent to the following pathetic exclamation: "Woe is me, that I ever had right of succession to any lands or living! For gif I had been borne sum puer cottar's son, I had nocht been so demanet, nor sic wilket practizes had bene plottit aganis me for my landis!" The younger brother, though permanently injured in constitution, escaped with life. The uncle and two of the aunts, Annas and Isabel, suffered the due reward for their guilt on the scaffold, and their sister Helen, who appeared to be less criminal, was banished forth of the kingdom.

A few other cases occurred about the same period in Scotland; but, upon the whole, poisoning was a rare crime in the country. Not so, in the same times, in France. The Archbishop of Paris, induced by the reports of the confessional, made to him by the father-confessors of his diocese, caused the government to establish, about the middle of the seventeenth century, a Poison-Court, or Burning Chamber, for the trial of cases of this nature. There was actually at this time sold, by two women and a priest who were brought before this tribunal, a powder which, from the real or supposed frequency with which it was used to hasten or change the succession in the families of the rich, had received the name of the *succession powder*!

By confessions of the preparers of this powder, some of the first families in the kingdom were implicated, though it was difficult to measure the extent of criminality, as the wretches to whom the nobility resorted, pretended also to foretelling and necromancy. Italians, destitute of the means of support, were apt to resort at Paris to the preparation of secret poisons for a livelihood. On one occasion two of these poison-venders were thrown into the Bastile, being reported to the government by a priest to whom they had made confession. While in this prison they became acquainted with Godin Sainte Croix, a young cavalry officer, of good family, but scanty fortune. Sainte Croix had been lodged in the Bastile under circumstances very characteristic of the times. He had become acquainted with the Marquis de Brinvilliers, a nobleman recently married to a young and beautiful lady, named Mary D'Aubray, daughter of a magistrate, Dreux D'Aubray. The young Sainte Croix ingratiated himself so far into the good graces of the marquis as to be received in his family as a domesticated visitor, and on the sudden death of the marquis, continued on such terms of discreditable intimacy with the marchioness, that, to stop the scandal, her father was induced to get him thrown into the Bastile, for a time, by a letter *de cachet*.

Evil chance threw the poison-vending Italians into the way of the enraged Sainte Croix, in their common prison. Being a man of violent and lawless passions, he eagerly grasped, as a means to gratify his revenge, at the skill which the Italians possessed, and on the release of all of them, at the end of a year, he kept one of them with him till he had acquired all their knowledge. This he taught to the Marchioness de Brinvilliers, with whom he had renewed his intimacy, and who entered into all his schemes. This lady, before entering on the plan of their mutual revenge, assumed the character of a sister of charity, in order that she might test the strength of Sainte Croix's poisons on the unhappy beings who fell under her care in the hospitals! Being satisfied in this respect, at the expense of the lives of several unfortunate, she suc-

ceeded, after several attempts, in poisoning her father! Her brother also became her victim; and so cautiously were these crimes gone about, that the authors of them were unsuspected. An accident after a time betrayed the poisoners, who had not stopped in their career, but had engaged in other murders. Sainte Croix was killed by the fumes of some poison which he was preparing, and a packet was found in his apartment, addressed to the marchioness, which contained various poisons and other documents. The marchioness, finding all efforts to get possession of the packet fruitless, fled, and took sanctuary in a convent at Liege. From this the law could not take her against her consent: she was, however, decoyed from it by stratagem, brought to Paris, and, after making a full confession of many more murders than she had ever been suspected of, was executed. Many cases of a nature similar to this, though not equal certainly in enormity, occurred in the same century in France, and the depraved morality which led to them, may too often be traced to the absurdities of the old regime, to deficient education, the source of Italy's ills, and to the wretched, weak, and partial enforcement of the laws.

We do not mean, and indeed our limits would not permit us, to carry down this history, if a sketch so partial can be so termed, to more modern days. We shall merely remark, that it has gradually decreased in frequency, and is now every where a comparatively rare crime.

Poisoning, we may observe in conclusion, has principally been the crime of the rich and great. The poor, unhappily, ill-taught, and feeling burdens which those above them in circumstances never know, may be charged with the heaviest proportion of other crimes, mayhap even of murder, but poisoning in all times has lain at the doors of the great. And even from the brief sketch that has been given, we may draw a lesson, and trace the causes and states of society that have led to the practice and increase of it. It is always a ready instrument in the hands of a tyrant or despotic ruler: but most of all does it prevail where nobles are numerous and poorly educated, and the execution of the laws defective. Where an uncle, a brother, a nephew, or other relation, who cannot starve, and whose nobility cannot stoop to work, sees that by one bold stroke he may elevate himself from the rank of a dependent to that of a rich and estate man, and that he may easily bribe or evade the law, even if detected, the temptation, where religious and moral principles are weak, leads to the commission of this fearful crime. From such causes, unquestionably, poisoning was a prevalent crime in France and Italy, full as they were of noblesse, with whom education and morals were low, and where the laws were weak and partially enforced. A nobler spirit of legislation and of education preserved our own land in a great measure from the practice of the deadly sin of poisoning.

A LONDON SUNDAY.

[From a volume of amusing sketches entitled "Glances at Life in City and Suburb," by Cornelius Webbe; Smith, Elder, and Co., 1838.]

LONDON is now, thanks to whatever has made it so, a better-behaved city, with better-behaved citizens, entertaining more wishes to be decent, and struggling more for the decencies, than did their working fathers. Despite of the continual cry about poverty, there is more apparent comfort, smartness, nay, even elegance, to be observed among the population which swarms along the roads leading out of town on Sundays, than our grandfathers dreamt of, or the grumbler of our day will acknowledge. That there is poverty, no one can deny; but that it bears any sort of comparison with the real increase in comforts of the working classes, I do most advisedly deny.

But I have to describe the march of Sunday out of town, and not the march of intellect. If it happens to be a fine day, the whole population is on the move; and not only is everything animate in motion, but every thing capable of being wheeled, propelled, paddled, oared, or sculled, is in motion also. Infinite is the preparation—indefinite the enlivements—indeterminate how and in what way the "day of rest" shall be most industriously occupied with toiling pleasure. "It is a day of rest," agree ten thousand John Smiths like one; and accordingly ten thousand John Smiths take twenty different roads out of town to enjoy themselves, the juniors drawing their little brothers and sisters in children's chaises, trucks, &c.—a labour of love which makes them very hot, but excessively happy. More considerate senior Smiths spare their heirs-apparent, and harness the thousands of Pompeys and Pinchers—the dog-population of this town—to similar vehicles; and if their impatience to set off with their living loads argues their love of the employment, they are happy too. The word is given to start, and away they go, barking and snuffing with delight, and wagging those pendulums of pleasure, their tails, in the most satisfactory manner possible to those who sympathise with dumb animals: for I hold this to be an indisputable maxim in morals—if a dog wags his tail, he is not unhappy. The Mrs Smiths follow in the wake, each one bearing a basket full to the cover with cold lamb, lettuces, bread, salt, small knives, and napkins, for a camp dinner in Copenhagen Fields, or other like green inviting localities. But not only the Smiths, but the Joneses, Wilsons, Williamsons, Johnsons, and Jacksons—and these pretty nearly embrace the whole London

family of man)—are migratory too; an universal dispersion, which purifies and peacifies the town for one day, and leaves the few who worship in temples to pursue their pious work in quiet. Here and there you meet with a pensive, solitary stroller, stepping fieldward too—a bachelor, perhaps, on his way to an appointment with one of the Miss Smiths: if he has a white waistcoat, and dusts his boots every half mile, he is doomed to dine out somewhere.

About two o'clock, a second migration takes place; and what would be considered a large population for any city but London, swarms and again disperses severally. Sticks by thousands now walk out of town with prim persons who keep very close beside them, and pat and encourage them in their efforts at locomotion. Canes also may be seen every where picking their path in the most genteel and jaunty manner possible: if gold or silver headed, they every now and then stroke down whiskers, tap at the teeth of their companions if very white and regular, beat a taproot on the brim of hats, or alarm pug dogs of delicate nerves with possible raps. Other dogs, not so timid, because they have a confidence in their powers, and powers not to be trifled with, enjoy themselves this day. Blucher, who draws a truck during the working-days, walks out with "young master," and really conducts himself in the most decorous manner—has a disengaged air—looks *degagé* and genteel; and if he does shake a cat in his way out of town, he does it in the playfulness possible spirit—quite like an amateur. Indeed, there seems to be a general amenity and amiability among all ranks on this day. Excessive are the attentions of young gentlemen to young ladies getting over impossible stiles, who look beautifully thankful to those very polite, disinterested young persons. The dandy sort of haberdashers put on their Sunday strut with their new boots, and walk as they do not walk during business-days. Young milliners, arrayed in all their glory, look as handsome and as high as their wealthy employers—forget their faggings, and up-all-night work, and spread the new fashion among the fashionable, who get their knowledge of what is modish by their observation of what passes about them.

The bell sounds for afternoon service. Its last ring murmurs along the aisles. And now the streets and roads are peopled with a new swarm—those who have dined early at home, that they may have a long afternoon abroad. Fathers, mothers, and their children, grandfathers and grandmothers, the toddling and the tottering, all are on the move for the outskirts of the town—all panting to enjoy again their seventh-day's sight of the green fields.

It is Betty's "Sunday out." Betty is a good girl; and what's more, good-looking; and moreover dresses well; and further, is well-shaped; and eke respectable; and, in addition, is beloved by every body, especially by the handsome butcher in her street, who is single, and, in a moment when butchers are as tender as their meat, popped the question whether she had any prejudice against butchers; and Betty, like the candid creature she is, answered that "she had no prejudices against any one;" when Crump—for that's his name—taking heart, asked her "if she would dislike being a butcher's wife." And Betty, turning red, and then pale, and then red again, replied, "that she would as lief be a butcher's wife as a baker's, for that matter, with the *purveyor* that she liked the butcher better than the baker;" so that the thing is as good as settled that she is to be Mrs Crump. And this is the reason why she looks so red, broiling, and fluttered to-day. She has a dozen friends to whom she must tell the important secret: they live at all corners of the town, and miles apart; but she means to visit them all—if she does, she will make a circuit which would tire a horse. I foresee that she will knock up at the second or third stage, and be glad of a dish of tea, a happy shedding of tears with some female friend at the turn in her fortunes, and an omnibus back, that she may get home in good time, as *missus* is mighty particular about servants coming home early. Betty's heart is full—too full; and so are her pockets, crammed with apples, oranges, cakes, a top, two whistles, and three balls which came over her master's wall—presents these for her "*nevies* and *nieces*, bless their dear little hearts!" Some of her mistress's cast-off things; a large lump of dripping; some tea and sugar (mind, of her own purchasing); and an extensive miscellany of broken victuals, are all done up in a bundle for the poor widow who was like a mother to her when she was a little motherless girl. "She doesn't mind carrying such things through the streets on a Sunday—not she—though Sarah Slipshod, the housemaid over the way, thinks it very vulgar, and, for her part, wouldn't do no such thing to oblige nobody;" but then the housemaid "over the way" has not half the heart that Betty has, which makes all the difference. And, besides, Miss Slipshod has high notions; and as she reads all the romances her mistress borrows from the library, is herself very romantic, and has been heard to say that she should like to curl her hair with new ten-pound notes; do nothing but stand at the door all day long on working-days; go to the Red House at Battersea on Sundays with "her *Henney*" (a musky footman out of livery), to eat shrimps and "*penywinkles*," and have him to pick them for her; drink shrub and water in one of the green bowers which overhang the green ditches of the gardens; take tea at a shilling a-head "*upstairs* all among the gentry," and look out of the window at the shipping, as she calls the wherries and such small

craft. She is not, and never will be, half so happy as humble Betty; for there goes Betty, with her round rosy face shining like a well-rubbed apple, her heart shining in her eyes; an universal philanthropist, though she does not know the word; looking at every thing with a hasty glance of curiosity, and at every body with good-nature and kindness, as if she liked every body and every thing. She has given away a shilling's-worth of coppers already to beggars and crossing-sweepers, who have since now the roads are dusty—no matter to Betty; she cannot resist an appeal to her heart for the soul of her: she has treated two little boys to a pennyworth of gooseberry-fool, because she saw them devouring it with their eyes, and found they had no pocket-money; and she has picked up three tumbled little ones, wiped their faces of the dust, and given them a penny a-piece not to cry. She deserves to be Mrs Crump, especially as Crump is doing well, and is a worthy, honest fellow. Why, there he is! he has met her "quite promiskus," as he says, but any one may read in his eyes that that is a trick of love: he puts her arm in his; insists upon carrying her bundle; and away they go—Betty blushing and embarrassed, but happy—Crump proud of his dear little Betty, and not wholly unconscious of the untarnished merit of his top-boots. It is a match.

Such is one picture, with a description of some of the prominent figures in the foreground, of a London Sunday.

THE HERRING.

The herring is a beautiful fish, and to be found only in the salt sea. There are many varieties of the species, but the largest size never exceeds twelve inches in length, and three and a half in circumference at the fullest measurement. In shape it very much resembles the salmon, and is closely covered with beautiful silvered scales. In taste it is mellow, and affords an excellent article of nourishment.

The herring is a remarkably prolific fish. It has been proved by calculation, that if the one-hundredth part of the roe were to arrive at full maturity, the German Ocean could not contain the produce of a single shoal. But this result is most singularly provided against, the herring being an object of prey in every stage of its existence. No sooner is the roe deposited than fish of every kind, from the smallest fry to the largest cod, congregate in immense numbers, and feed themselves for several months. It is reasonable to believe that this voracity would soon annihilate the herring, were there no protection during the period of incubation. But this also has been provided for. The roe being deposited on the sandy or gravelly bed, the male overlays the whole by a coating of what is termed milt. This substance is generated in the male herring in the same way as roe generates in the female, and is uniformly of the same size. The immense quantity of milt which covers the roe necessarily protects the embryo for a considerable time; and before the whole of the milt has been destroyed, a good many of the young herrings have arrived at such a stage as enables them to escape; but how, when, or where, it is impossible to determine. Many, but fruits, have been the investigations on this head, and it is more than likely the problem will never be satisfactorily solved.

Notwithstanding the quantity that is destroyed in embryo, after all the milt has been consumed, the number of herrings in a mature state is almost incredible. One shoal of ordinary size has been known to measure thirty square miles; and judging from the density of the body, as shown in their distances from each other in the fishermen's nets, and taken up at different stages of depth, it would extend to twenty-five feet on the side; and thus give 251,811,300 cubic feet of solid fish. 38 feet are allowed to one full barrel—consequently the produce of one shoal would amount to 43,374,629,571 barrels—a number exceeding by far the whole quantity which has ever been caught in Scotland, England, and Ireland. Now, when it is proved that not merely one, but several shoals follow in succession to the shores of the east coast of Scotland at the present time, it must be evident that the herring is, of all fish, the most prolific and numerous.

The spawning season in herring does not appear to be regulated by the state of the weather. On the east coast of Scotland, they seek in-shore from the end of July until the end of September. On the coast of England, they make their appearance some months later; and, until lately, large shoals found their way up the Firth of Forth in December and January.

While herrings are full, they progress to the land very slowly. It has been demonstrated that they never go over more than three to four miles in a day; but immediately after they have spawned, the whole body flies off like lightning—it has not yet been ascertained to what place. Few of the curers, however, regret this rapidity of flight, because the quality is then so very much deteriorated, that they are seldom or ever cured to advantage.

Besides the large quantities of white fish—such as cod, ling, haddock, &c.—which follow and devour the herrings, they are preyed upon most voraciously by whales, porpoises, and dog-fish. The whales are what the fishermen term *bottle-nosed*; and although in every respect like the Greenland *finnors*, they are so wild and swift that it is impossible to kill them. Many hundreds of whales are to be seen along the coast during the herring season. Porpoises resemble the whale in appearance, but are only about ten feet long at their full stage of growth. They are very rapacious, but not numerous. The dog-fish are of the shark species. In size they vary from eighteen inches to two feet, but will only measure six inches in circumference at the thickest part. The head measures about four inches, and terminates in a sharp peak. The skin is remarkably rough, and frequently dried and used as sand paper for polishing. The fins are formed of a thin membrane, supported by a number of sharp and very poisonous stobs. The eyes are situated near the middle of the head, and the mouth is immediately underneath them. It has sharp pikes for teeth, beautifully set in semicircular form. The dog-fish do not generate by the roe, but are very prolific, some of them producing fifteen and twenty young ones. They are most voracious—devour the herrings in immense quantities, and destroy with their teeth the fishermen's nets. So strong are these fish, that the fishermen have known them shake their nets until they have not left a single herring in the meshes. In attempting to lift any of them out of the water, they will very coolly turn round and bite the hand. Dog-fish seldom, however, find their way into the centre of a shoal, but congregate in loose bodies at the outskirts.—*Aberdeen Herald*.

TENACITY OF LIFE IN PLANTS.

The roots of many plants are very tenacious of life, and intense temperatures do not destroy their vitality: the roots of the *vitis agnus castus* will not be affected though immersed in boiling water; and boiling water may in many instances be applied to the roots of plants without injury. Again, if a mass of roots be divided into two parcels, acetate of lead in solution, being absorbed on one side, may be evolved again by the second parcel on the other side. Certain plants may absorb some poisons by their roots with impunity, which would be destructive to others.—*The Naturalist*.

ANTIQUITIES AND CURIOSITIES.

The collectors of relics will perhaps feel interested in the submitted statement of the prices paid within the last few years for various objects of historical curiosity:—

The *ivory arm chair*, presented by the city of Lubeck to Gustavus Vasa, was sold, in 1825, to the Swedish chamberlain, M. Schmekel, for the sum of 58,000 florins.

The *prayer-book* used by King Charles I., when on the scaffold, was sold in London, in 1825, for 100 guineas.

The *coat worn by Charles XII.*, at the battle of Pultawa, and which was preserved by Colonel Roson, who followed the king to Bender, was sold, in 1825, for the sum of 561,000 francs. A fragment of the coat worn by Louis XVI. at the altar, was announced in the catalogue of a sale in 1829, and would probably have fetched a very high price, but it was withdrawn.

The *Abbé di Tersan* paid a very high price for a pair of *white satin shoes* which had belonged to Louis XIV.

A tooth of Sir Isaac Newton was sold in 1816 for the sum of £7,300. The nobleman by whom it was purchased had it set in a ring, which he constantly wears.—*Apologia of teeth*, it may be mentioned, that at the time when the bodies of Helois and Abelard were removed to the Petits Augustins, an English gentleman offered 100,000 francs for one of Helois's teeth.

At the sale of the library of Dr Sosman, at Stockholm, in 1820, the *skull of Descartes* sold for a considerable sum.

Voltaire's *cane* was some time ago sold at Paris for 500 francs.

An *old wig*, which had belonged to Kant, the German philosopher, was sold, after his death in 1804, for 200 francs.

A *waistcoat* belonging to J. J. Rousseau, was sold for 950 francs, and his metal watch for 500 francs.

In 1822, Sterne's *wig* was sold at a public auction in London for 200 guineas.

In 1825, the *two pens* employed in signing the treaty of Amiens, were sold for £1,500.

The *hat worn by Napoleon* at the battle of Eylau, was sold in Paris, in 1835, for 1,950 francs. It was put up for sale at 500 francs, and there were thirty-two bidders.

There is at Pezenas an *arm chair*, which is said to have belonged to Molierre, and to which tradition has given the name of the *Fauteuil à la Molière*. Its form bears evidence of its antiquity. When Molierre was living at Pezenas, he was accustomed every Saturday afternoon to go to the shop of a barber named Gely. This shop was the resort of all the idlers and gossipers of the town. These politics were discussed, and the *histoires* of the day repeated from mouth to mouth. The large wooden arm chair, above alluded to, stood in one corner of the shop, and it was a sort of observatory to Molierre, who, when seated in it, attentively watched all that was passing around him. This old chair is now about to be sold in Paris, and will no doubt soon fill a place in some collection of curiosities.—*Court Journal*.

LINES ON A DOO.

My bonny bird, wi' wings o' blue,
An neck o' ever-changing hue,
Your song's but understood by few,
Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

You show me your leg an' your little footie,
An tell me you think ye're a matchless beauty;
An' Solomon's mistress had eyes like you,
Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

I see by your airs ye hate dormacy,
An' think yourself a'ne o' the aristocracy,
An' very proud o' your rank, I trow,
Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

Ye never think o' means an' ways,
To get yourself a suit o' claes;
Yet ne'er a dandy's dress like you,
Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

An' e'en for food your mind's at ease;
When'e'er ye meet a field o' peas,
Ye never stand to take a few,
Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

Our mony lils require the doctor,
We canna want a tooth extractor;
But'dil a dentist troubles you,
Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

Could man the knots o' fate undo,
An' human nature change for doo's,
How gladly I'd change states wi' you,
Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

But, Pigeon, dinna be o'er proud,
The evil's set against the good;
O' trial too, ye'll ha' a few,
Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

Did ever any saucy hen

Use you as Jeannie did Cockpen?

Or dab yo awa like a vila sea-mew,

Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

An' whiles when ye're sittin' a' at your ease,
At a glorious feast o' some neighbor's peas,

A shot's a thing to no be sneezed at, I trow,

Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

I say nae mair—wha dinna ken

That does ha'e ears as weel as men?

I'll meet my fate, an' maun maun you,

Wi' your hoo, hoo, curdookey doo.

THE COMMON FLEA.

At a meeting of a Scientific Society at Oxford, some time ago, Mr Hussey, of Christ Church, read a paper on the growth of the flea, in which the changes through which the flea passes were described, and an account was given of some observations of the manner in which changes may be retarded. The flea, it was stated, lays from eight to twelve eggs, which fall down into crevices, or among dust, where they are hatched in about five days; they produce small white maggots like cheese-mites, which increase in size for about fourteen days, when they spin a hair or case of silk around them, and become chrysalids. Within this case they gradually darken in colour, until, at the end of about sixteen days, they come out of it perfect fleas; having been, on the whole, about thirty-four days from the laying of the egg to the perfect state. M. DeFrance's opinion concerning the food of the young maggot, was quoted; namely, that it is fed by small grains of dried blood, which the parent has the power of extracting from the skin of the animals on which it feeds.—*Newspaper paragraph*.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL.

A glance at the main arsenal, from the heights on which the barracks stand, shows you that it is an immense establishment; but so much of it is concealed by the high wall around it, that you can form no conception what a fearful magazine of human slaughter it is, till you are admitted within the enclosure. You had expected to see several hundred, or, possibly, some two or three thousand pieces of cannon, large and small. But instead of this you behold acres and acres of ground, covered with field pieces, and howitzers, and mortars, lying in rows, side by side, as near to each other as they can be placed, with just room enough

between the rows for one man to walk, in taking care of them. I could not help shuddering as I passed along, and thought how all these open-mouthed instruments of death might, and probably would, be employed; and coming up to a small train of fine brass pieces, which were taken at the battle of Waterloo, I asked an officer of rank, who was standing by, how many cannon there were in the arsenal? "Twenty-seven thousand," he replied coolly. So ignorant was I, in these matters, that I had hardly supposed there were so many in the whole British empire. Yet here there were before my eyes twenty-seven thousand pieces of ordnance, in this single enclosure—all now reposing peacefully in their places, but ready to be waked up at any moment. It is said, that when the allied sovereigns visited this arsenal, after the fall of Napoleon, they could not at first believe their own eyes. They suspected that their royal host of England intended to amuse them with the cheap deception of wooden imitations, till the ringing of the brass metal convinced them that it was no ostentatious pageantry by which they were surrounded. Within this dread enclosure, too, there are no less than two millions of bomb-shells and cannon-balls, all neatly painted and piled up; and in one of the buildings, ten thousand sets of artillery and dragon-harness, which may be put in requisition at an hour's notice.—*Newspaper from Europe*.

EARLY RISING AND LYING A-BED.

The late Judge Mansfield, it is said, when in court, made a practice of inquiring into the habits of life of all the witnesses who had attained old age; and this curious inquirer invariably found that, however differing in other matters, they had all been early risers. The celebrated Dr Cheyne, in his "Essay on Health and Long Life," gives it as his opinion, that "nothing can be more prejudicial to tender constitutions, studious and contemplative persons, than lying long in bed, lolling and soaking in sheets, after one is distinctly awake or has slept a due and reasonable time. It necessarily (he says) thickens the juices, engorges the solids, and weakens the constitution. A free open air is a kind of cold bath, especially after rising out of a warm bed, and consequently makes the circulation brisker and more complete, and braces up the solids, when lying in bed dissolves and soaks them in moisture. This is evident from the appetite and hunger which those that rise early feel beyond that which they get by lying long in bed." John Wesley, the founder of the Methodists, who had studied the art of healing, wrote a sermon on the advantages of early rising. He observes in it—"One common effect of either sleeping too long or lying too long in bed is weakness of sight, particularly that weakness which is of a nervous kind. When I was young, my sight was remarkably weak. Why is it stronger now than it was forty years ago? I impute this principally to the blessing of God, who fits us to whatever he calls us to; but undoubtedly the outward man which he has pleased to bless was the rising early every morning." Dr Wilson Philip, in his Treatise on Indigestion, says—"Although it is of consequence to the debilitated to go early to bed, there are few things more hurtful to them than remaining in it too long. Getting up an hour or two earlier often gives a degree of vigour which nothing else can procure. For those who are not much debilitated and sleep well, the best rule is to get out of bed soon after awaking in the morning. This at first may appear too early, for the debilitated require more sleep than the healthy; but rising early will gradually prolong the sleep on the succeeding night, till the quantity the patient enjoys is equal to his demand for it. Lying late is not only hurtful by the relaxation it occasions, but also by occupying that part of the day at which exercise is most beneficial." The Lord Chancellor More rose at four in the morning. Milton left his bed about the same hour; so did Bishop Burnet the historian. Sir Matthew Hale, when a student, devoted sixteen out of twenty-four hours to study. Dr Parkhurst rose at five o'clock all the year round; and Archdeacon Paley, and Drs Franklin and Priestley, all recommended and adopted the practice during the greatest portion of their lives.—*Newspaper paragraph*.

THE GARDEN SPIDER.

This spider has several amusing traits, which she exhibits to those who study her economy. If, in issuing from her cave in the morning, she finds her web loaded with dew-drops, she goes to the centre, and laying hold of the web with all her feet, gives her body three or four convulsive jerks, which instantly shakes off the dew. If a spider of the same or of another species ventures upon her web, she endeavours to entrap or drive off the intruder; and if the stranger runs to the lower edge of the web to escape by suspending itself by a line as usual, the owner follows, and instantly cuts the line by which the stranger swings, who falls to the ground. Sometimes, instead of cutting the fugitive's line, she will endeavor to pull up the culprit, "hand over hand," with great adroitness, but seldom succeeds in this. If the web has been torn by the capture of a fly, the owner tries to repair it; but this is never neatly done, showing that she is a much better maker than a mender. If, however, a principal stay of the web be broken, she will quickly replace it with another.—*The Analyst*.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ABROAD.

In all the large towns of France there are excellent public libraries, arranged in spacious rooms, with salaried librarians, every accommodation for readers, and every disposition to assist them. I could not visit these libraries without wishing that similar institutions could be introduced in the principal towns of England: for in a country where there are so many persons whose circumstances allow them leisure, where education is more and more diffused every day, and in times when men's minds are on the stir, the easy access to books in every part of the kingdom could not but prove at once agreeable and beneficial. The encouragement of such an object would be a wise application of the public money.—*Knight's Tour in Normandy*.

CONSUMPTION OF OPIUM IN CHINA.

It is a curious circumstance, that we grow the poppy in our Indian territories to poison the people of China, in return for a wholesome beverage, which they prepare almost exclusively for us. From the following statement made by Mr Davis, late chief superintendent at Canton, it appears that the money laid out by the Chinese on their favourite drug, far exceeds what they receive for their tea. The imports in 1833 were—opium, in value £1,616,167 dollars; other imports, £1,656,077; total, £2,476,944. The exports in 1833 were of tea, £9,133,740 dollars: of other exports, £1,309,321; total, £20,443,270. The Chinese smuggle all this opium, and pay the difference between the price of it and that of the tea they export in silver.—*Newspaper paragraph*.

USEFUL INVENTION.

The following paragraph, or one something like it, under the head *Useful Invention*, makes its appearance in the newspapers once in about every ten years:—"A German mechanic has constructed a music-stand, which, by a slight pressure of the foot, turns over the leaves as the performer proceeds. To performers on the violin the invention will be very agreeable."

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